

Lamp Making Workshop



Lamps... everyone has them, everyone needs them!
What I can't figure out is why they cost so much... well, the really cool ones anyway.

You've seen those designer shows where they find really great accessories that are just perfect and wish that you too could get your hands on one of those? Well, you can actually make a lamp out of just about anything. It just takes a little imagination and thinking outside the box. A broken blender, a stack of books, a few cigar boxes, even an empty wine bottle and a bunch of fake grapes combined with some lamp parts, make a designers masterpiece.

In this "easy to do" workshop, we will be taking the latter to create a unique lamp project for the wine aficionado in your life, weather that be yourself or your Aunt Irene. I'm also going to assume that you have some crafting knowledge and know how to use your tools.

Getting Started

You'll need to gather some things before you begin... but I would start with a **bottle of wine!** First you'll need to uncork it (save the cork), because it will need to be emptied before you can make a lamp out of it. Next you'll need a **wine glass**. I wouldn't waste my time pouring wine into it; you'll just have to clean it later. So bottle in hand, it's time to start searching your cabinets for the rest of the parts you'll need.

For **the base** you will want something that is solid and has some weight to it. I found a great glass snack tray at a yard sale that I thought was perfect for this project. Though you could use a wooden cutting board or a cheese platter.

You will find **fake grapes** at your local craft store or online. I prefer realistic looking grapes myself. The more realistic, the better and expect to pay about \$5 for them. Or, you can use fake cheese and crackers with a knife, or fake fruit, also found online. I also added some silk grape leaves to fill in the space.

Lamp kits are readily available for purchase. Or grab one of those ugly lamps that you have in the guest room and take it apart. Not all lamps are made equal, some have the cord coming out of the side of the socket or through the bottom. There are different switches as well. It's important to know which one will work best for your project. I chose to use a socket that has the cord coming out of the bottom because I didn't want the cord to show.

Your **lamp shade** is very important; it will make or break your lamp, I found this perfect shade on an ugly base in my guest room (That's where I got my lamp works from too).



Tools & Supplies

You won't need many tools for this project-

Screwdriver to put the wires on the socket.

Wire strippers or cutters to strip the wire that will attach to the socket.

Glue to assemble everything. I prefer a 2 part epoxy because it is the most versatile.

E-6000 is a great glue as well and doesn't require mixing.

(Hot glue doesn't work well on glass, super glue is not efficient on rubber and glass)

Drill & Diamond or bit for drilling the hole in the bottle so you can hide the wire.

(You won't need this if you use a socket where the cord comes out the side)

OK, Let's get started...

Now that you have finished your bottle of wine, rinse it out well, you don't want your lamp fermenting while sitting on the end table, do you? Take care not to ruin the label! I have chosen to run my cord through the bottle so I will need to drill a hole near the bottom of my bottle. The size of this hole depends on the size of your cord. Make sure to get a diamond or glass bit large enough to accommodate the wire.

Drilling the hole is not a quick task...

and you can't be too careful, remember that you are drilling a hole into glass, take the appropriate precautions. I wrap the bottle in a towel and set it on a solid surface. You don't want the bottle to roll as you are drilling it so keep a firm but not too hard of a grip on it. Glass is more susceptible to breaking when it is stressed or gets too hot so you'll want to keep slow even pressure on the drill as you are



cutting through the glass. To keep it from getting too hot and avoid cracking, I keep a small glass of water next to me, dipping the drill bit into it every few seconds or so to make sure that the drill bit stays cool. Some people put the bottle in a tub of water while they drill, I don't like to do that because I don't want to ruin the label. You shouldn't have any problems as long as you keep the bit wet and don't twist the bit or push too hard.



If you are having trouble getting your hole started, put a piece of masking tape on the spot where you'll be drilling, this helps keep the bit from "running away". Once the hole is drilled, **fish the cord through** the hole and up & out of the neck. You might need to use a wire hook to do this.

Once again, if you are using a socket with the cord coming out of the side, you can run the cord down the back of the bottle and ignore all of the above!

Connect the wires to the terminal screws on the socket. The wire with smooth insulation goes clockwise around the brass screw, and the wire with the ribbed insulation clockwise around the silver screw, then tighten both screws and put your socket back together. (I'm going to assume that you can do this on your own or that your kit came with instructions)

So, now that your socket is wired and put back together, get out your epoxy and glue it to the top of the bottle. Make sure that this bond is solid, you don't want it falling off when you try to turn it on! Once it is set, plug it in and try it out before you go any further because it's easier to fix when it's not attached to the base.

(They actually make a "Wine Bottle Kit" that comes with the socket attached to a cork that fits in the bottle. You can find them online, 2 for about \$13.)



Now the designer in you is unleashed



You should first do a dry run... decide where everything is going to go. Place all of your parts exactly where you think they look the best. Then take everything off and mix up some epoxy. Epoxy should be mixed in small dime sized batches because it cures quickly and you don't want to be rushed. I place the wine glass first and once it is set, I place the wine bottle (you can also use super glue for this because glass to glass works well).

Now that you have your focal points in place (the wine glass and bottle) you can arrange and glue down your accent pieces. In this case, the grapes, leaves and cork. Epoxy works best for this because it bonds a variety of materials together with little effort.

This should be a quick project once you have all of your pieces together. Now go try something else!



Things to Keep in Mind...

- Safety precautions should be taken when drilling holes into glass, use safety gear!
- When drilling a hole in the bottle, put a piece of masking tape over the spot that you want to drill the hole, this will help keep the drill bit from slipping.
- Make sure that the inside of your bottle is clean and stays clean before you attach the socket. You will not be able to clean it after it has been assembled.
- Use the right glue, a solid bond is important; you don't want to bump it and have to continually fix it.
- Make sure that your lamp has enough weight to support itself so that it won't tip over easily.
- Follow the directions that come with your lamp kit. Or know what you're doing when playing with electricity and wiring.

Lamp Making Links-

I do a lot of shopping through Ebay. You can find a variety of objects for both reasonable and unreasonable prices. Shop carefully; shipping can add up and not all sellers are equal.

[Fake Grapes on Ebay](#)

[Fake Cheese on Ebay](#)

[Fake Crackers on Ebay](#)

[Glass Drill Bits on Ebay](#)

[Wine Bottle Lamp Kit on Ebay](#)

[Vintage Glass Snack Sets on Ebay](#)

You can find any of this in a variety of places. I like to cruise the thrift stores or yard sales, once a week and have a large collection of "parts" for projects on my "to do list".

www.lampshop.com Has a large variety of lamp parts and shade frames to choose from, and they are reasonably priced. A one "stop shop", if you're not looking for the "deal".

www.TheCoC.com

The Center of Creativity has a list of Amazon books and links to many other useful things, as well as an updated workshop schedule with online payment and other "How To" information. (While there, don't forget to click on the sponsor ads)

